

## **The Boy From Across the Hall** by **propertyofthelosersclub**

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**Summary:**

Eddie was starting college in the hopes to create a new life away from his mother, and the small town of Derry. Little did he know that with the start of his new college life the possibility of a relationship could change all his plans. For the better or worse he didn't know.

# 1. Guitar Boy

## Author's Note:

HEYYYY!! This is my first chapter fanfiction for Reddie. Please comment, and let me know if you enjoy the story or if it sucks let me know too. I am always looking to improve, and have only gotten one comment ever so I don't know if my writing is trash or not. Enjoy :)

Starting college was something that Eddie had been counting down the days for since he realized how overbearing his mother was. In his mind, as a young child, she was just a normal parent that was worried about her only child, but he could remember the exact time that this had flipped, and the realization had set in that his mother was far from an ordinary parent.

He had just come home from a movie night at Bill's house, not a second late from his curfew. Being a good kid he always tried to follow his mother's rules even if most of them were a bit unreasonable.

He was laying in his bed about to fall asleep when he heard her footsteps climbing the stairs. This made him nervous it was rare that his mother would leave the first floor of their small house. Because of Sonia Kasbracks size she was never coming upstairs she mostly slept on the downstairs couch, and Eddie was grateful for that because it gave him a sense of privacy.

His door slowly opened and his mother was standing their arms crossed with a dead look on her face which Eddie couldn't read. She cleared her throat to get his attention and started walking towards him. "Eddie you've been hanging out with your friends a lot lately, and I think you should be spending more time at home focusing on homework." She started to tap her foot glaring down at her small son.

Things were already bad with his mother, and nothing could make this worse. "Mom I am getting straight A's right now I'm trying really

hard!" He tried to reason with her, but he knew it was going to get him nowhere. "I'm sorry Eddie, but I'm going to be putting a lock on your door to keep out the distractions if you want to get anywhere in life you will focus on school." He looked up at her horrified his heart racing. So I guess things could get worse he thought.

Her explanation was that his friends were "bad influences," and a few days later, sure enough, a lock showed up on Eddie's door. He tested it out and as he guessed it could only be opened by the outside. A few times he got around this by sneaking out his window and sometimes even letting some of his friends come in through it, but this soon came to an end when his mother caught Mike sleeping on his floor at three am. Promptly kicking him out and telling Eddie that she would board the window up if she ever saw that "disgusting boy" in his room again.

He shook his head thinking of the memory. Every time he thought about his mother a shiver would go down his spine. Good thing he didn't have to deal with that anymore he was on his way college finally free from not only the biggest monster in his life but also the monsters of Derry. He swore to himself to never come back to the horrors of Derry Maine, and he was going to keep that promise. Even if he was living on the streets.

"Hey, Eddie are you okay?" His thoughts were interrupted by Bill who was nervously looking over at him.

"Yeah i'm fine just thinking." He looked over at Bill and gave him a smile of reassurance. Boy was he so lucky to a friend like Bill. He had always been there for Eddie, letting him stay over whenever his mother was too much. Even if it meant consoling him crying over it at least once a week. Everyone seemed to like Bill he was just that type of guy, kind to everyone, always including those who felt alone. His best quality thought was that he was genuine in his every action and always looked out for Eddie. This was probably why he had a slight crush on Bill was he was younger, he figured everyone who knew Bill did as well. He was quite good looking with his auburn hair, and lanky frame. Much more attractive than Eddie, sometimes making him feel like the boring ugly friend, but Bill also made him feel confident and reassured him he was definitely not ugly or boring. Eddie looked up to the boy with fondness and thought about how

lucky he was to have Bill as a roommate and best friend.

“Are you excited to set up our dorm room, I bought so many posters!” Bill gestured to the back seat of the car which was covered in an assortment of posters, lights, and pictures.

“You have no idea how hyped I am I wonder who will be in the room next to us hopefully someone cool, I don’t think I could handle living next to another crazy person.” Eddie laughed slightly shaking his head realizing for the first time how free he felt to be out of his house finally.

“Tell me about it.” Bill rolled his eyes and pulled the car to a stop in front of a tall brick building. The two boys exchanged nervous glances as they started to get out of the car. A lot had to be unpacked, and their room being on the fourth floor was not helpful. Eddie sighed looking at everything in the car with his hands on his hips. He grabbed the first box and started making his way to the building Bill right behind him.

“Finally done!” Eddie huffed laying down on the bed ready to take a nap. Between unpacking for almost three hours, and having not slept the entire six-hour car ride he was exhausted. “Come on Eddie you can sleep all night let’s go meet the people across the hall, I saw one of them and I’m sure you will think he’s smokin hot and so your type.” He winked taking Eddie’s hand, pulling him up from the bed.

“Bill just because I’m gay doesn’t mean I think every guy is attractive.” He looked at Bill smugly to which Bill responded by rolling his eyes. “Eddie trust me on this one you will want to see him.” Eddie really did not want to meet new people right now, but Bill seemed so eager about it that it made him curious. He looked at Bill who was still awaiting his response and sighed. “Fine let’s go.”

The two boys stood in front of their neighbor’s door and looked at each other. “This was your brilliant idea so go ahead and knock.” Eddie sassed receiving an annoyed look. Bill took a breath and put his hand up to the door knocking twice. Gosh, he is acting like we are meeting our future soulmates or something Eddie shook his head smirking at the expression on Bill’s face.

The door opened revealing a curly-haired boy who was wearing a green striped collar shirt and khaki shorts. If this was the boy that Bill had been referring to as Eddie's type he was half right. The boy was very polished and put together and from what Eddie saw and was decently attractive. "Hello, anything I can help you with?" The boy in front of them said looking from Bill to Eddie. Eddie looked over at Bill waiting for him to speak, but his best friend seemed to be unable to as he was just standing there stiff his eyes wide glued to the boy in front of them. Eddie nudged him and cleared his throat expecting Bill get the hint to stop staring and talk. He seemed to have finally snapped back to reality when Eddie nudged him for the third time. He shook his head "Oh yeah... Hi, i'm Bill, and th-th-is is Ed-d-ie." His stutter which had been gone for years seemed to have come back and Eddie looked over at him amused at how smitten he was over this random guy. "Oh, you must be the two that live across from us. I'm Stan." He smiled looking over at Bill who was now blushing and reached his hand out for Eddie to shake. "If you want you could come inside my roommate and I are just watching some T.V." Eddie looked over at Bill waiting for some sort of response, or even a reaction but obviously, that was not going to happen as the boy was still staring straight ahead. "Sure we would love to." He grabbed Bill's arm and lead him inside.

As they stepped into the room Eddie noticed how neat one side of the room was the books were lined up along the wall in order, and the bed comforter was pressed tightly down on the bed. It made him feel comfortable and at home until he looked at the other side. Boxes upon boxes were stacked up all over the bed that was still bare with nothing on it. The dresser was filled with food, and open soup cans were on the floor. How a room could be this messy in just a day was beyond Eddie's imagination. He continued to look around the room until his eyes landed on who must have been Stans roommate. He matched his side of the room that's for sure.

Eddie couldn't help but stare at him he was truly a vision. His curly hair although messy fell perfectly over his face, and he surprisingly looked really good in black ripped jeans. Something Eddie never thought he would find attractive. The boy was sitting on a beanbag chair with a guitar in his hand strumming some tune Eddie couldn't make out. His thoughts were interrupted by Bill nudging him and

pushing him slightly over to the boy. He tried to play it off as if he was looking for a place to sit so that he wouldn't notice him staring and sat down in a chair opposite the boy.

Guitar boy looked up and Eddie could see his blue eyes now, and wow were they beautiful. A crooked smile crossed his face as he looked at Eddie. Damn who knew such a messy boy could be so attractive he could feel his face turning red at the thought. "If you stared any longer I'd swear you were basically eye fucking me." The boy smirked winking at Eddie and laughing at his horrified expression. "Seriously," He heard Stan say from across the room. "These two are living across the hall from us for an entire year and that's the first impression you want to make ... a shitty joke? Really!" He looked over at Eddie apologetically. "Sorry Stanny," The Boy stood up and walked across the room towards Eddie. "Nice to meet you I'm Richie," he stuck out his hand.

Richie... what a nice name, Eddie thought shaking the boy's hand. Feeling his heart skip a beat at the touch. This was going to be an interesting year.

## **2. Drunk Bill**

### **Summary for the Chapter:**

Cups and bottles were everywhere not to mention clothes, and tons of food. It smelled like vomit, alcohol, and sweat. Eddie thought he was going to throw up on the spot just by standing in the doorway.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

WAZ UP!!! This is way earlier than Saturday, but I could not wait to post it.

Much to Eddie's dismay the first few weeks of school were quite boring and had a serious lack of hot guitar boy. Except for the few awkward encounters in the hallway (that usually ended in Richie making a comment about how short and adorable Eddie was) nothing between the two had really happened. He was sitting on his bed doing yet another homework assignment two weeks early trying as hard as he could to ignore the loud music coming from the room across the hall.

Okay Eddie focus who was president in 1958, he looked down at his assignment racking his brain for the answer as he tapped his pencil on his forehead.

The door opening, and shut with a loud bang drew Eddie's attention up from his assignment, and honestly, he was thankful. He looked up and saw Bill pacing the room muttering to himself about something that Eddie couldn't make out. He was running his fingers through his hair and honestly looked like death.

"Okay, what's going on?" Bill looked up at him and for the first time since he entered the room and Eddie noticed how bloodshot his eyes were clearly he had been crying. "Ed-d-ie I was ov-ver at St-ah-ah-ans... SHIT!" Bill sat down on his bed burying his face in his hands. Eddie made his way over to him facing the distraught boy. He was obviously very drunk from the look in his eyes, and Eddie could smell strong liquor on his him. "Bill just breathe tell me what happened,"

this normally worked to calm him down, but he had never seen Bill this drunk before. Even when they were in High School and would go to parties he never got plastered.

What the hell did Stan and Richie give him? He looked down at the boy ready to talk him through it when he realized Bill had fallen asleep on his shoulder. He rolled his eyes and pulled a blanket over him reminding himself to ask Bill about it in the morning.

He could hear the music getting louder, and looking at his clock it was getting late. He had three classes tomorrow so this was going to be a long night of not sleeping.

\*\*\*\*\* Eddie woke up to the delightful puking sound coming from his roommate. "Oh my gosh my head has never hurt worse than right now." He looked over at Bill who was standing over a garbage can grabbing his head with an uncomfortable pale look on his face. Eddie stood up and walked over to his desk throwing Bill a bottle of ibuprofen. He winced at the smell wafting from the garbage can and tried to ignore it focusing on the main issue. "So... are you going to explain what happened last night?" Eddie crossed his arms looking at Bills expression which changed to sadness, his eyes shifting from the floor to Eddie nervously.

"Honestly id rather not talk about it." He pressed his face into his pillow and sighed. "You're going to have to tell me, eventually I am going to figure it out." Eddie sassed back knowing that if he didn't push Bill the boy would never admit anything and he didn't want to deal with sulking Bill all year long.

"I guess you're right..." he sat up wincing from the obvious pain of his hangover. "Last night there was a party at Richie and Stans as you know," Eddie nodded rolling his eyes remembering how the music did not stop until four in the morning. "Well you know how I have been trying to get Stan to like me, and we've been flirting back and forth," he shifted uncomfortably. "Well things were going really well we were talking, and dancing almost kissed a few times I even got his phone number." Bill looked down at his hands and Eddie could see tears forming in his eyes. "I went to get another drink and when I came back I saw him making out with some random guy!"

Tears started streaming down his face now and he didn't bother to wipe them away as they soaked into his shirt. "So when I saw him

doing that with that guy I didn't know what to do so started to drink more, pretty sure I made out with someone and the last thing I remember was that ended up back here somehow." He sounded panicked and scared almost as if he was ashamed of himself.

Eddie couldn't help but wonder if Richie was the one who Bill made out with, but he pushed the thought out of his mind. It wasn't the time to be worrying about Richie. Bill was the priority, and who cares if Richie made out with anyone it's not like they were dating or even friends for that matter.

"It's going to be okay Billy I'm sure Stan didn't know what he was doing he was probably drunk. Anyone who does that to you doesn't deserve you no one is better than you Bill Denbrough!" Eddie hated Stan he really did. Anyone who made his best friend feel worthless like this was on his bad side.

"Bill do you want me to go get you some breakfast?" He smiled down at the boy trying to get his mind off of what happened last night. If anything was good for a hangover and heartbreak it was food. Bill nodded and sniffled into his pillow.

He grabbed his keys and planned to go to the school's University Center. The coffee and bagels were surprisingly above average and he knew it would cheer the boy up. As he stepped out into the hallway he noticed the door of his neighbor's room open. It wouldn't hurt if he just stuck his head in to say hi right? He stepped into the room and my gosh was it a mess.

Cups and bottles were everywhere not to mention clothes, and tons of food. It smelled like vomit, alcohol, and sweat. Eddie thought he was going to throw up on the spot just by standing in the doorway. He also noticed three people sleeping on the floor, and one of which was Richie snuggled between a red-haired girl who had a blanket around her, and some other guy he recognized, Benny or Benji something he didn't remember. That wasn't important at the moment he had to see where Stan was. He looked around again his eyes directing him to movement. There he was the man that made his roommate cry Stan. He was sleeping in his bed with someone Eddie couldn't see. He scowled and turned to the door ready to leave not wanting to deal with the sight in the room anymore let alone the smell. Just as he turned around something grabbed his leg stopping him, and making him gasp.

He looked down to see Richie, "Hey short stack come on in stay we have tons of dri...." he gulped and was cut off by himself as he vomited on Eddie's shoes. Eddie froze looking at Richie then down at his shoes petrified. The boy below him smirked wiping his mouth with his hand. "Sorry Eds didn't think that was going to happen I promise I am usually more smooth than this," Eddie swore this morning couldn't get any worse. "Clean this up now, right now and don't call me Eds."

Richie's put up his hands. "Okay okay calm down geez you're a feisty little one aren't you," he winked and even in his rage Eddie couldn't help but blush. Despite the anger inside him Richie could still make him blush, not to mention the butterflies he got from the near sight of the boy and that irritated him. He pushed the feeling away.

"Let's go out into the hallway people are sleeping," Richie whispered pulling Eddie into the hallway shutting the door behind them. "So Eds what brought you to our humble abode so early this morning." Eddie scowled "First of all it is 12:30 dipshit, and second I told you not to call me that." Richie raised his hands in defense "Hey...you're the one who came into my room."

"Fine, I came here because I wanted to ask you if you had any forks." He lied not wanting Richie to know he was really curious who was with Stan, and honestly, he was also wondering who that girl was with Richie. He heard a laugh coming from the taller boy, "No we don't have any forks are you sure there isn't anything else you wanted to ask?" What did he have to lose he was just going to ask for the sake of Bill, "Ahh... yeah, I guess I was wondering who is that person in Stans bed with him?" He tried to sound as nonchalant as possible.

Richie's eyes lit up and a grin came across his face, "OHHHH you and Stan I should have known he has been talking the boy from across the hall for the past four weeks." The horrified look on Eddie's face should have given away that, that was not why he was asking the question, but still Richie continued. "I always was half listening but now it all makes sense. I should have known he wanted to jump in your pants, well I guess he fucked that up real good if you know what I mean," he nudged Eddie with his arm.

"Wait... did Stan have sex with that boy." Eddie whispered glancing

at his door making sure it was still shut. If Bill heard this he was going to flip out, and he was already very upset. "No no no, but I'm assuming he wants to through, I mean he was basically dry humping him last night." He started to open the door of his room. "Sorry Eddie Spaghetti sucks that Stan did that, you know since Stan has a new guy," he paused as if to create a dramatic effect judging by the smirk on his face.

"If you ever want someone to help you forget about him I could always show you a good time I'm just a walk across the hall." He licked his lips looking Eddie up and down and disappeared behind his door laughing. Leaving Eddie dumbfounded, his face redder than he thought possible.

### **3. Confessions**

#### **Summary for the Chapter:**

He stood up walking over to Richie slowly “No Richie I was paying attention I just remember you specifically saying out in the hallway this morning that you thought Stan liked me, and if I wanted to get over him I could just call you.”

#### **Notes for the Chapter:**

This is highly not edited and short so forgive me haha.

Eddie's mind was swarming with thoughts as he stood staring at the door in shock. Was he being serious? Even if he was being serious for some reason Richie thought he was into Stan which was very wrong. Well, at least now he knew that Stan really did have feelings for Bill. That was probably the only positive thing that came out of that conversation.

Completely forgetting why he was in the hallway in the first place he dumbly walked back into his room and sat down on his couch staring into space thinking about what exactly he was going to do.

“Eddie?” Bill looked over at him confused probably wondering why he didn't have food with him. He seemed amused at the way Eddie was sitting staring at the ceiling. Eddie opened his mouth to say something, then closed it trying to decide what exactly he was going to tell Bill. He decided with “You really need to talk to Stan honestly Bill he really does care about you, but then again that's all according to Richie.”

“Oh, so you talked to Richie huh?” Bill smirked at Eddie raising his eyebrows up and down. Eddie ignored his look and decided that he was not going to mention the comment that Richie made about showing him a good time, Bill would never let him live it down if he knew that. Richie was probably joking anyways.

“Yeah not about much he just mentioned how Stan has talked about you a lot and really does like you, but for some reason, he thought it was me I don’t know it was all very confusing.” Like it was on cue they both heard a knock on the door. They exchanged looks, and Eddie stood up to answer it, Bill following behind him.

There stood Stan and Richie, and the expression on Stans' face gave away that this was not going to be a pleasant visit. Eddie glanced at Richie who if he was being honest looked like a child who had just been yelled at by his mother. He laughed to himself at the thought of Stan yelling at Richie for all the dumb shit he did, but yelling at him purely out of brotherly love he could imagine that they had a friendship like that. “Sorry to interrupt your morning Eddie, but I really need to talk to Bill, and Richie has some explaining to do to you. May I borrow Bill for a few minutes?”

Bill looked at Eddie nervously, Eddie gave him a small smile back and Bill made his way out the door. Stan shoved Richie in slamming the door behind him. Eddie turned around on his heels feeling happy to have the upper hand finally against Richie, the boy honestly looked upset, and now he was in Eddie’s room, not his. “So Richie, are you going to do some explaining now?” he sassed crossing his arms.

“Oh, wouldn’t you like to know baby.” Richie stood up walking towards Eddie cupping his face in his hands. Eddie couldn’t help, but blush at his touch. Come on Eddie hold your ground don’t let him affect you so much, his mind tried to convince the blush to subside. “Actually yes I would like to know what is going on this has to do with my best friend.” He pushed Richie out of the way and walked over to his desk trying to get as far away from him as he could.

He heard a sigh coming from Richie, and his expression changed to serious. Something he had never seen on the tall boy before. “So Stan has had a thing for Bill since school started, and he was trying to ask him out last night, but I kind of forgot being the drunk idiot I am.” He paused shaking his head as if he was scolding himself. “You see my friend Henry also really likes Stan, and he asked me to help him out, so being the dipshit I am I dared him to go over to Stan and start making out with him just to see what would happen.” He rubbed his face with his hands and continued. “Everyone was so drunk that

when they started making out everyone was cheering and egging them on. Gosh, Eddie, I'm so stupid." Richie was looking down at his shoes fidgeting with the carpet.

"Wait so you knew Stan liked Bill. Why did you act like he liked me?" Eddie smirked at Richie.

"Is that really all you got out of that entire story? Wow, Eds you really should pay more attention." Eddie could tell he was trying to deflect the question. Finally a weak stop he was going to trip Richie up.

He stood up walking over to Richie slowly "No Richie I was paying attention I just remember you specifically saying out in the hallway this morning that you thought Stan liked me, and if I wanted to get over him I could just call you." By the time he was done saying this he was standing in front of Richie, who for the first time seemed at a loss for words. He stared back at Eddie, and Eddie could feel how tense he was. He leaned down his face inches from Richies.

"Nothing to say huh?" he was so close that he could feel Richie's breath on his face. If he inched forward any more their lips would touch. He could tell Richie wanted to kiss him, should he just go for it?

Before Eddie could decide a loud bang on the door interpreted them, making Eddie jump and Richie cursed out loud. They both looked over at the door, and then back at each other until another bang hit the door. "I guess you should get that." Richie gestured to the door his voice sounded disappointed. Eddie was going to kill whoever was at the door ruining the moment. Even if he didn't exactly know what would have happened if they weren't interrupted.

He opened the door only to see Stan and Bill topple in on top of each other. He couldn't help but laugh at the two whos expressions looked like a deer in headlights. "So I guess you both made up? Or should I say made out." Richie clicked his tongue shaking his head at the two boys who were standing up trying to fix their disheveled clothes, and hair.

"I really thought Eddie and I would be the first two to hook up in the

hallway of this dorm, but I guess you two take the prize.” He laughed earning a slap on the arm from Eddie.

“Oh, so you finally told him about your feelings?” Stan scoffed attempting to change the subject away from him and Bill only to be received by uncomfortable looks from the two boys across from him. “So I’m taking that as a no then?” Bill smirked at Richie. “I guess you still have some explaining to do huh Rich?”

Eddie crossed his arms looking over at Richie waiting for some sort of reaction. Richie shifted on his feet, and leaned on the door “So Eddie Spaghetti would you like to accompany me to dinner date tomorrow night? I could do the explaining then.” he added a wink at the end of it still looking uncomfortable. Eddie looked over at Bill who was raising his eyebrows at him tilting his head towards Richie.

His heart was pounding with excitement, but he tried to sound as unenthusiastic as possible. “Yeah sure I guess I’m free,” he looked up at Richie and nodded. “Maybe if the date goes well we could come back to my place for some more fun if you know what I mean.” He nudged Eddie on the arm and made the same clicking sound as he did earlier. Eddie rolled his eyes, and pushed the taller boy away, “Yeah right you wish Trashmouth.”

Eddie had a date with Richie, hot guitar boy, the boy that had occupied his thoughts since he had first laid eyes on him. “See you tomorrow Eds,” Richie waved walking back into his room.

“Don’t call me that,” Eddie said smiling to himself shutting his door behind him.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

Thanks for reading!

## 4. The First Date

### Summary for the Chapter:

“Richie this is perfect,” he smiled up at the boy. “Who knew Richie Tozier could be so romantic.” He smirked standing on his toes to press a kiss to the tall boy's cheek.

### Notes for the Chapter:

Yeee!! New update. Hope everyone enjoys this I think it's so adorable. If you don't like reading on A03 my Tumblr is: @propertyoftheloseclub.

Eddie was frantically throwing clothes on the bed running around his room. His first date with Richie was tonight, and honestly, if he did not look absolutely perfect he was going to have a panic attack. Richie refusing to tell Eddie where they were going did not help Eddie from overthinking just about every outfit. What if it was super fancy and he was underdressed, what if it wasn't fancy, and he was overdressed. The possibilities of looking completely awful were odds Eddie was not happy about.

Bill was sitting at his desk laughing at Eddie as he was perusing around the room like a lunatic. “Honestly Eddie if I didn't know I would guess you were going on a date with a famous movie star for crying out loud you need to chill.” Eddie shot Bill an angry look and continued picking up outfits, and looking at them in the mirror.

“What do you think of this?” He held up blue overalls, a pink shirt, and white shoes. Bill stood up walking over to Eddie standing behind him looking in the mirror. “This looks great casual, cute, and very stylish I might add.” he smiled at Eddie. “Just be yourself tonight, and if Richie doesn't like you for you he's not worth it.” Bill looked down at Eddie as if he was a proud mom, and then retreated back to his bed to let Eddie finish getting ready.

One hour later Eddie was putting the last touches on his hair slicking it down, checking out himself in the mirror finally satisfied with the

result. He took a deep breath trying to calm keep himself calm. This was his first date since High School, and his first date with a guy that he actually had quite strong feels for. Even though he didn't know Richie that well the sexual tension between the two was something that hadn't gone unnoticed, and made his heart pound in his chest every time he was near the boy.

He slid on his jacket, taking one last look in the mirror before stepping out into the hallway. Okay, calm down Kasbrak it's just a first date. Who knows this could lead to a great friendship. His mind tried to prepare for the worst and he took one more breath before stepping into the hall.

Right as he was about to knock on Richie's door it swung open, and Richie Tozier was standing in front of Eddie. He couldn't help but stare even though Richie was wearing his usual black jeans he looked more put together than usual. In a grey shirt, black jacket, and even nice shoes Eddie was impressed. "I know I look great." Richie bragged spinning around only to trip, catching himself on the door. He laughed at himself and looked at Eddie his eyes growing wide. Eddie could feel a blush on his face at the attention, and he swore Richie could hear his heart beating with nervousness as he looked down at the floor fiddling with the carpet. "We should probably get going?" He looked up at Richie who still was staring at him with his brown eyes clearly deep in thought. Eddie got the feeling that Richie was looking into his very soul. He coughed trying to shake the awkwardness. "Speaking of going are you going to tell me where exactly we are going?" Richie started walking down the hallway towards the stairs. He turned around gesturing Eddie to follow. "You will see soon cutie be patient," Richie winked slinging an arm over Eddie's shoulder.

Ten minutes into the walk and Eddie still had no idea where they were going. Things had been going really well the conversation was light, and he almost had the courage to hold Richie's hand twice! He decided against it though thinking that it was too soon.

They had been walking on a sidewalk for most of the way, but Richie suddenly turned leading them through a wooded path. "We are about five minutes away just have to walk through here first." Eddie didn't exactly like nature very much except for the few times he had gone

down to the Quarry with Bill and Mike back home. The air was always too fresh, and the bugs grossed him out. Not to mention the dirt, he shivered at the thought. Even so, he was trying to keep an open mind, and it helped that Richie was by his side. He trusted Richie.

“Here we are,” Richie pushed away some trees out of the way, and they walked onto an open field. “Richie” Eddie gasped grabbing Richie’s hand his eyes widening at the site before him.

A blanket was set up right on top of the edge of the field overlooking the evening sunset perfectly. A basket that he assumed had food in it was sitting on top of the blanket, and two glasses were next to it. Richie walked over to the blanket and smiled sheepishly over at Eddie. “I hope it’s enough I wasn’t sure if it was too cheesy or cheap,” He rambled his cheeks turning pink. Eddie thought his heart was going to burst Richie was so adorable. “Richie this is perfect,” he smiled up at the boy. “Who knew Richie Tozier could be so romantic.” He smirked standing on his toes to press a kiss to the tall boy’s cheek.

The two sat down, and Richie started taking the food out of the basket distributing it onto plates. “So Eds tell me about your family got any hot brothers or sisters just in case we don’t work out?” Richie laughed at his own joke, and Eddie rolled his eyes. “Nope just me, and my mom my dad died when I was very young I barely remember him. My mom and I didn’t have the best relationship either, but Bill and Mike always have my back.” Eddie noticed a change in Richie’s expression his eyes filled with sympathy.

He reached over resting his hand on Eddie’s “Yeah I didn’t have the best luck with parents either, but hey on the bright side we are on our own now who cares about them.” He smiled at him reassuringly.

The rest of the night was better than Eddie had imagined. They had more in common than he thought, and surprisingly he got used to Richie’s dumb jokes and even found himself laughing at some of them. They ended the night looking at the stars snuggling close to each other on the blanket Richie’s arm around Eddie pulling him close.

“Look Eds a shooting star you know what that means, you have to make a wish.” Richie looked over at Eddie a grin spread across his face. Wow, could he get any cuter? He shifted his body to face Richie squeezing his arms around his hips and looked up at the boy. “I wish... hmm,” he smiled to himself “I wish every night could be like this one.” He felt Richie pull him closer as if he was making sure Eddie knew he was his, and honestly, Eddie felt as though he was. “What’s your wish Rich?” he asked snuggling into Richie’s neck.

“Honestly Eds all my wishes have come true tonight,” he said pressing a kiss onto Eddie’s forehead. Eddie felt as though at that very moment he could kiss Richie. He had never felt this way about someone so fast, and it scared him. He pushed the thought to the back of his mind pulling himself into Richie looking back up into the night sky.

## 5. Labels

### Summary for the Chapter:

Richie didn't answer at first unsure if Eddie had really said what he just said. His hands were shaking, but they found their way behind Eddie's neck.

### Notes for the Chapter:

Song lyrics from: "I've just seen a face" From Across the Universe originally by the Beatles.

NEW CHAPTER!! Hope you enjoy feel free to leave a comment good or bad I'd like to hear what you think thanks.

Just edited and realized I called Stan "Satan" in one part LOL!

### Richie's POV-

Richie was laying in his bed trying to balance a pencil on his nose his mind swarming with thoughts of his date with Eddie just a few hours ago. He had never been on a real date before, and honestly, it had gone great, actually better than great it had gone fantastic. He was used to one night stands or friends with benefits so this was odd for him. The short boy from across the hall had an effect on him. One he had never experienced before, and he wasn't sure what to make of it.

"STAN!" he yelled throwing the pencil at the back of Stan's head. The curly haired boy turned around taking off his headphones a scowl on his face. "What do you want," he snarled looking like he was about to walk over to Richie and punch him square in the face. He knew Stan would never do that. The guy really was a softy if you got to know him.

Richie shifted uncomfortably on his bed this was a question that was difficult to ask because he had, had many conversations with Stan over the years claiming that he would never be tied down. 'Bachelor for life' were his exact words actually.

“Uhh... What does it mean to be in a real relationship? I only ask you because you’re so smooth with the guys Stan the Man.” Stan rolled his eyes thinking over Richie’s question. “Well, Richie a real relationship is a commitment to each other and only each other.” He stared at Richie with a stern look on his face.

“Woah! If you’re referring to me sleeping around in High School that’s a low blow!” Stan shook his head smirking and continued, “They’re the person who you go to first when something happens, but most important you can talk to them about anything and trust them with all your deepest fears, and worst anxieties,” he looked up at Richie who was furrowing his brows trying to take in what Stan had said.

“Who knew you were such a sap Stanley Uris,” he smirked at Stan who was still looking annoyed. “Whatever Richie, I know you’re only asking because you actually like someone for once in your life, who knew a tiny boy across the hall could change mister ‘bachelor for life’” Stan mocked standing up walking towards the door “if you really like him just ask him out it’s not that difficult.”

“NOT DIFFICULT what does that mean!” Richie yelled out after him as Stan shut the door drowning out his words. Richie slumped down on their bean bag chair and picked up his guitar. He started to strum a tune that he had heard on the radio recently.

***“I’ve just seen a face I can’t forget the time or place where we just met he’s just the guy for me, and I want all the world to see we’ve met.”***

He smiled thinking about Eddie, if there was one way Richie Tozier could express emotions it was through song, and this particular one reminded him of Eddie. Music had always been a huge part of his life. It helped him get through tough times with his family and took him far away from the harsh realities of life. He continued to strum deep in thought.

***“Falling yes I’m falling, and he keeps calling me back again.”***

Richie was so deep in thought and focused on his guitar that he hadn’t noticed someone standing in the doorway. Eddie stepped into

the room carefully shutting the door behind him a grin plastered across his face. "Wow, who knew Richie Tozier could sing, let alone actually sound good." *Could this boy get any cuter?*

"So Eddie Spaghetti you couldn't stay away from me for long enough?" He reached up his hand pulling the boy into his lap causing Eddie's face to turn a bright crimson color. "I guess you could say that." Silence fell between the two boys and it wasn't awkward silence more intense unspoken words that needed to be said lingering between their subtle glances. Richie tightened his grip on Eddie's hips. He started to lean forward when Eddie coughed moving his head to the side.

"Anyways..." he rushed out, "What were you playing when I walked in I've heard the song before, but I can't place the name." Richie although being disappointed ignored Eddie's rejection and picked up the guitar from the ground as Eddie shifted to sit in front of him.

"It's a song that's not as well known, but it reminds me of you, Eddie." He looked down at his fingers and began to strum the tune he was playing earlier.

***"I've just seen a face I can't forget the time or place where we just met he's just the guy for me and I want all the world to see we've met."***

He looked down at Eddie whose expression looked like he had just heard an angel sing. Richie's palms started to sweat at the thought of Eddie staring at him like that and he continued.

***"Had it been another day I might have looked the other way And I'd never have been aware But after this I'll dream of him tonight."***

He paused looking down at Eddie again to gauge where he was, or if he wanted him to stop, but the boy looked utterly speechless.

"Th-th-at-t song reminds you of me?" He stuttered sounding like a nervous Bill. "Well, of course, Eddie every time I look at you that's all I'm thinking about."

"Can I..." He stopped looking down for a second. "Can I kiss you?"

Richie didn't answer at first unsure if Eddie had really said what he just said. His hands were shaking, but they found their way behind Eddie's neck and he pressed his mouth to Eddie's, softly but firmly. He moved one arm around his waist and pulled him closer taking in his entire body. If he could pull Eddie any closer he would, he felt as if he was in a dream as their lips continued to move together.

Richie knotted his fists in Eddie's shirt, pulling him harder against himself. He groaned softly, low in his throat, as Eddie began to kiss his neck sucking, and biting it leaving purple marks. They rolled over onto the floor, tangled together, still kissing. Just then Eddie stopped, Richie opened his eyes uncertain as to why. Eddie put his forehead against Richie's and looked at him.

"What is it Eds?" Richie asked softly brushing Eddie's brown hair out of his eyes. "Nothing, I'm just trying to make sure this is all real."

"OH trust me, baby, I'm all real," Richie laughed to himself unable to keep the serious moment. Eddie rolled his eyes kissing him again.

They sat there for a few minutes just enjoying each other's company. Richie felt truly happy for the first time in years a feeling that had felt so far lost. With Eddie in his arms snuggling up to him he realized how much he had missed this feeling.

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The next few weeks were the best weeks of Richie's entire life. Being with Eddie made him feel on top of the world. Although school seemed to get in the way the two still found time to see each other every night often times spending the night together. It also helped a lot that Stan and Bill were dating. Bill and Richie would often switch rooms at the same time high fiving each other as they passed. Everything seemed to be going perfectly until one afternoon when Eddie got a phone call.

Richie and Eddie had been playing a rather intense game of scrabble which to Richie's delight he was winning. He was about to make another move when Eddie's phone started to ring. Eddie stood up reaching for his phone "You better not move any of my pieces when

I'm on the phone, Richie! I'm watching you." Richie laughed reaching over switching around a few of Eddie's pieces. He could hear Eddie from the other side of the room sounding exasperated with whoever was on the other end.

"I know I know I KNOW!" he yelled into the phone.

"Yes I am coming home this weekend like I promised," he paused waiting for a response and started pacing around the room.

"No, I don't have a girlfriend." Eddie looked over at Richie nervously who was very confused. Obviously, everyone knew Eddie as gay who could he be talking to.

"Actually Mom I'm dating someone else." he sighed into the phone as if to calm himself down, then continued. "I'm dating a guy actually his name is Richie, and as a matter of fact, he's coming home with me! Goodbye, mother." Eddie moved the phone away from his ear and dramatically hit the end call button.

"So I'm coming home with you?" Richie asked smirking at the enraged boy. "I'm sorry Richie you really don't have to if you don't want I just got upset when she started yelling about my 'Sickness' and how I can be cured."

"Sickness?" *My god what monster had Eddie grown up with.*

"Yeah apparently being gay is a sickness to her just if you come maybe she'll realize how happy I am, and finally accept me." He rushed out obviously panicking, "Growing up was terrible Richie if she sees that I'm happy just maybe I don't know..." he shook his head "Bill and Stan can come too, and then you can meet Mike! We can make it a road trip I promise it will be super fun." Richie stood up walking over to the boy who was shaking, his eyes filled with fear, of a past that Richie would never begin to understand.

He wrapped his arms around Eddie bringing him into his chest close. "Eddie your moms just jealous because she can't have me anymore." Eddie slapped him on the arm scowling. Richie laughed at how adorable it all was. He pulled Eddie forward so they were facing each other.

“All of us here love you for who you are Eddie, and we wouldn’t want you to be any different.” He kissed him on the cheek hoping that his words had calmed Eddie’s nerves a little because they were completely true.

## **6. The Awkward Dinner**

### **Summary for the Chapter:**

A heavy silence settled over them, thicker then the uneasy tension in the atmosphere and Eddie could hear the ticking of the clock that sat on the top of the TV in time to his heart beat. As if it was mocking him. Tick Tock Tick Tock Tick Tock the clock continued to pester as he felt the time passing by agonizingly slow.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

Finally getting a chance to write this... sorry it has been so long! I finished the next chapter as well so I will have that up soon. No longer will anyone have to wait for chapters since I have more free time now that I finished school.

Also, this isn't edited very well... sorry my dudes...

**\*WARNING\*:** Some homophobia in this chapter.

### **Eddie's POV-**

Eddie, Richie, Bill, and Stan were on their way to the infamous Derry Maine. As they flew down the interstate the closer they got the more Eddie wanted to jump out of the car. They were about two hours into the trip, and Eddie was already regretting everything. He was sitting in the back (since Stan had insisted on riding shotgun) and Richie was next to him which provided some sort of comfort, but even so he couldn't help but think about opening that door and jumping out. Come on open the door his mind began to pester as his eyes shifted from the window to the handle. That's how badly he wanted to avoid the terror that was waiting for him at home. The car ride so far had extremely uneventful Richie had fallen asleep five minutes in, and the awkward tension between everyone was evident. All Eddie could think about was how terrible everything was going to go.

"Eds is everything alright?" Richie yawned opening his eyes for the

first time in two hours. Eddie was so stuck in his mind he didn't notice the annoying nickname. He sighed staring out the window as if in a dramatic movie.

"Yeah Rich I'm okay," he lied.

As Bill pulled the car onto his street Eddie felt his hands start to shake. This had been the first time he had been home in months, and the first time coming home with a boyfriend or even a significant other for that matter. Although the four were staying at Bill's house Eddie had promised to have dinner with his mom much to Bill's disliking.

"You ready?" Bill looked back at him obvious worry in his eyes. Bill had been through it all with Eddie, and except for Mike he definitely knew the fears that Eddie faced in that home. Bill had been the center of a few fights back when they were in High School, and the two shared a knowing look. He nodded hesitantly squeezing Richie's hand as the four of them made their way up to the house.

They all stood in front of the door, and Eddie was feeling extremely small all of a sudden. It was if the door was staring back at him challenging him to go inside. "Oh come on Eddie she can't be that bad," Stan said pushing his way past the three. He brought his hand up to the door and knocked swiftly the sound pounding through Eddie's head. The four waited, and Eddie heard his mother grunt as she made her way to the door. With every footstep that Eddie heard he felt his body convulse into himself, it was like a slow death march and he was the one being trampled over. Okay, maybe he was being a bit overdramatic, but really that's how it felt. The door finally opened after what felt like a year, and Eddie stared up at his mother.

He swore to himself she had gained at least twenty pounds since he saw her last, and she towered over the four boys with her large figure creating a shadow. Eddie felt Richie's hand brush his, and their pinkies locked together creating a small sense of comfort.

"Eddie bear my darling I've missed you so much." his mother shouted pulling him into a hug tearing his hand away from Richie's grasp. "Come in come in," She faked a smile at Bill and Stan dismissing that Richie was even there completely.

The four followed Sonia into the house Eddie still in the firm grasp of his mother as they made their way into the living room. Richie gave him a sympathetic look, and Eddie mouthed 'sorry' at him.

"Come sit down here we can all catch up, and you can introduce me to your friend." She spits out the word friend as if it was a curse word and looked over at Richie. "Sure, mom this is Richie my boyfriend, and his roommate Stan," Stan nodded and Richie gave a small wave. "Obviously you already know Bill." Sonia nodded at the boys ignoring that Eddie had called Richie his boyfriend, and sighed as if thinking about what to say next.

A heavy silence settled over them, thicker then the uneasy tension in the atmosphere and Eddie could hear the ticking of the clock that sat on the top of the TV in time to his heart beat as if it was mocking him. *Tick Tock Tick Tock Tick Tock* the clock continued to pester as he felt the time passing by agonizingly slow. He shifted in his chair uncomfortably and looked over at Bill who was eyeing Stan. Richie began to tap his hands on the coffee table as Sonia shifted her eyes towards him glaring. She let out a loud sigh causing Eddie to jump, and Richie to stop tapping.

She stood up and walked into the kitchen, "Eddie I made all your favorite foods! I'm sure you don't get much food at that disgusting university of yours they probably barely even feed you."

Bill coughed catching Eddie's attention. "Should we go in their?" He whispered looking at Eddie. "Eddie I have no idea what to say this is all so weird," Stan added quietly. "Normally Richie is the one who is talking non-stop, but he hasn't even said a word." The three looked over at Richie whose face turned pale at the mention of his name. "Okay, to be fair I didn't think you wanted me to talk," Richie muttered holding up his hands defensively.

"Boys!" Sonia called out from the kitchen where she was setting up plates. "Richie try and make conversation you're our best bet," Eddie whispered harshly at his boyfriend as the four sat down at the table.

"Wow Mrs. K this all looks so good," Richie smiled putting his napkin on his lap. He picked up his fork and started to scoop a pile of mashed potatoes onto his plate. Sonia stared at him in horror as he

filled half of his plate with the white fluffy substance covering it entirely with gravy, and corn.

She tore her eyes away from Richie giving him a nasty look and looked at Eddie her face grew into an innocent smile. "Eddie, how are your grades doing? I'm sure you're showing top marks just like in high school."

"Of course mother, but honestly Richie is doing way better than me he is really smart."

"MmmHm I'm sure he is," she dismissed the comment turning her attention to Bill who was shifting his food around on his plate staring down at it. "Bill, have you found any nice girls yet?" She smiled sweetly at the boy obviously happy to have the subject changed from Richie. Bill looked up at her and glanced at Stan. "Uhh no I.. uhh I haven't Mrs.K," Bill looked back down at his plate. Sonia smiled seeming to be satisfied with his answer as she turned her attention back to Eddie.

The rest of the dinner was silent, and Eddie wanted to slam his head down on the table just to get himself out of the misery that was this awkward dinner. She could invite him to as many dinners as she wanted, she could fake a smile, she could even try and make small talk, but he would never forgive her for how she took his childhood away from him.

"You know Eddie we really should get going my mom is expecting us to be at my house at 7:00." Stan stood up taking his plate over to the sink, and Richie followed the two giving each other side eyes having their own silent conversation that Eddie couldn't read. Bill followed the two outside not bothering to say anything to Sonia. This left Eddie alone with his mother.

He stood up stretching his arms yawning "Well mother it's been great to see you," his voice was dripping with sarcasm.

"Eddie wait!" he felt a cold hand on his arm stopping him from leaving. He turned around looking at his mother seeing the dead look in her eyes as she clung to him. Her nails were digging into his arm and he could feel his skin burning under her grip. He wrenched away

from her grasp turning around to face the door. "Please stay," she pleaded.

Eddie had enough, this whole idea was a disaster, and he didn't know how difficult it would be to admit to her that he was dating Richie. It wasn't that he was ashamed it's just being back in Derry after all humiliation he received a child having to finally admit to his mother that he was, in fact, gay was proving to be harder than he thought. Even though she hadn't asked or even brought up relationships he felt as though he was hiding something from her and that even having a conversation with her would be fake.

"Eddie..." her voice breaking Eddie from his thoughts as he looked back up at her. She reached out for him again placing her hand on his shoulder.

"No..." he moved her hand, "You know what mom I can't stay." He paused looking up at her the anger in his bodybuilding. "This house... this th-his stuff.." his voice started to waver and he stood up straighter trying to get out the next sentence. "I can't do this mom. I can't do these fake conversations, this awkward dinner, and the fact that you ignored Richie all night. That was just plain rude." The look on his mother's face had morphed from pleading to something darker. It was if the whites of her eyes were now gone, and the way she looked down at him shadowed her eyes creating a grim expression. Her fists were clenched together, and the blue vein on her forehead was bulging out. Eddie could see the sweat forming at the top of her black curls as she made her way over to him.

"Edward you will not speak to me that way," her tone was unyielding, and she was close enough that Eddie could smell her Kenzo Flower perfume which caused him to wince. He backed away from her and stood up as straight as he could attempting to be taller.

"It's Eddie, and I should have the right to speak to you the way I want I am an adult. We should be able to have an adult conversation."

"You want to have an adult conversation?" Sonia asked placing her hands on her hips a smirk curving on her plump face adding to the darkness of her eyes. Eddie nodded hesitantly sticking his nose up in

the air hoping that he appeared strong despite his small stature.

“Okay let’s have an adult conversation then, are you aware that what you’re doing with that... that person is a sin. God sees everything you know, and the bible says that people like that should be damned to hell.” Eddie stared back shocked that she was actually acknowledging the fact that he was gay. He felt a twinge of sadness fill him with the realization that this small acknowledgment from his mother about his sexuality was making him feel accepted. This just proved how messed up this whole situation was. He knew that he wasn’t a bad person nothing about him was wrong.

He walked closer to her and stood on his toes so that their eyes were level. “Say it, mom. Say what I am.” Sonia huffed her eyes turning into little black slits on her face. The tension in the room was building with a silence that was growing thicker with every second that ticked by. Eddie opened his mouth his words hanging in the air. It was if the two were both holding their breath waiting for the words that Eddie had been holding back for so long to finally be said.

“I’m gay mom, and you need to accept that.” What came next was expected, and not expected in every way. It was if everything was going in slow motion as Sonia struck her son across the face. The slap was as loud and stung on his face. Eddie clung to his face the pain growing where the contact had hit. Just below his eye, he could feel blood dripping down an obvious small cut where her ring had caught him. He staggered backward falling on the floor, clutching his face, eyes watering.

He looked up to see Sonia’s large frame looming over him. “Don’t you ever say those words in my house.” She spat at him to angry to restrain herself from even helping her son up. Eddie laid back down on the ground the tears streaming down his face. He watched his mother trudge up the stairs her broad shoulders hunched over with anger.

Once he could only hear her faint footsteps he laid his head back down on the floor and began to sob, and even though he knew he had his friends he felt alone.

## 7. Eddie's Inner Peril

### Summary for the Chapter:

Eddie's inner thoughts are overtaking his head as he goes back to visit his childhood hangout spot.

### Notes for the Chapter:

I like this chapter a lot! I think it really shows the effects that one person can say to someone can have. Also, I wanted to show how Eddie is a strong character who can figure something out on his own without Richie or Bill.

### Eddie's POV-

After laying on his living room floor staring at the ceiling for what felt like a year Eddie finally found the strength to lift himself off of the floor. As he stood up and made his way to the door his feet feeling heavy. It was as if he was walking through a pool of thick cement and with every step that he took, he was sinking deeper and deeper.

Bill, Richie, and Stan were still sitting outside in the car, and honestly, Eddie had completely forgotten about them completely. His mind that was usually filled with thoughts was now blank as if it were numb to the events that had just transpired.

As he walked to the car rather lethargically he noticed that blood was still dripping down his face. He reached up a frigid hand now realizing how much he was shaking and wiped the blood from his face creating a smear of the red liquid across his face. He ignored it's warm feeling as it continued to drip down as he opened the door of the car.

He sat down next to Richie a cold stare now occupying his face. "Hey, bub how was talking to your mom?" Richie squeezed his shoulder and from the corner of his eye, he could see Richie smiling at him. He didn't answer still eyes fixed on Stan's seat in front of him,

he slightly turned so that Richie couldn't see the blood that was slowly drying just below his eye.

When Eddie didn't answer he could feel Richie's grip tighten around him. He sighed slightly and smiled sympathetically down at the smaller boy. "Hey whatever she said forget about it! We are going to have an awesome time at Bill's house. Okay?" He leaned down and kissed Eddie gently on the cheek. His lips felt soft and despite Eddie feeling completely empty inside he still felt his face blush, and he looked up at Richie found.

Richie's eyes grew wide as he noticed the blood. "Oh oh it's nothing really I just fell," Eddie spat out quickly rubbing his hand over where the blood was drying. Man, she really knocked me good he thought as his hand rubbed across the gash that was now across his face. Richie looked at him sadly and nodded though he didn't look convinced. He rubbed his hand gently across Eddie's face and kissed his nose softly.

Stan coughed loudly tearing the two away from the moment, "Okay, if I have to see any more PDA from you two I will seriously gouge my eyes out with a spoon." He scoffed at the two sarcasm dripping from his voice and if it wasn't for the smile on Stan's face Eddie would have been scared. "Oh shut up Stanley you're just jealous that you can't smooch Bill because he's driving." Richie stuck his tongue out at Stan and slung his arm back around Eddie's shoulders.

Stan looked over at Richie his eyes squinting challengingly. He leaned over to Bill whose eyes were glued on the road not particularly paying attention to what was going on in the car, and placed a kiss on Bills cheek with a smack. He looked over at Richie with a smirk and folded his arms turning back towards the front of the car. Richie scoffed rolling his eyes leaning to whisper into Eddie's ear. "They have nothing on us baby." He smiled into Eddie's hair pressing a kiss to his forehead.

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The rest of the week in Derry Maine went a lot better than the first day. The four had a great time exploring around the old town. Bill and Eddie acted as tour guides for the week showing Stan and Richie all around Derry. They went to the movies and saw a really dumb

comedy about a superhero that had some sort of power and fought some sort of villain honestly Eddie didn't remember much about it as he had spent half of the time staring at Richie's reaction to most of the movie. He swore the man would laugh at anything.

After they went for ice cream, and Richie bought an 'Everything but The Kitchen Sink Sundae' which he claimed he could finish attempting to prove Stan wrong who told him there was no way in hell. He ended up throwing up halfway through which caused Stan to burst into laughter dropping his milkshake on the floor.

It was the last day of their visit Eddie decided to go down to the quarry alone. This past week he had been ignoring the thoughts that were gnawing away at his brain, and he needed time alone to sort it all out. As he left the house early that morning hoping not to wake anyone up his feet lead him towards a familiar path.

Eddie and Bill spent almost every summer at the quarry sharing secrets, playing games their imaginations taking them to wild places like pirate ships, outer space. They fought monsters together, evil super villains, and aliens. Those were the days when life was simple. It was a place where the boys would go when life's struggles would hit them the hardest where they could forget. Later on, Mike had joined the two and they formed a sort of club. The quarry was a place that they could all get away from life and just be kids.

As Eddie made his way around the rocks near the water a breeze flowed through the air causing a shiver to run up his spine in the cold morning light. The feeling reminded him of the childhood innocence that he once had here. That feeling lingered through the air as memories that were long ago consumed him filling his mind.

As the memories came flooding back Eddie glanced around at everything that seemed to stand so still even with the breeze. He walked along the edge of the water and listened to the crunch and rustle of leaves with each step that he took. The water was flowing slowly downstream turning from silk water to ice as the season was changing. The weather growing colder with each passing day and this created a coolness in the air that added so much to the scenery.

It wasn't quite winter yet, but not exactly fall sort of an in-between

season something that Eddie always loved.

He continued following the flow of the lake tracing his fingers through trees that were near the edge of the water. He could feel his feet slowing down as he looked down at his own reflection. A scowl grew across his face and all he could think about were his mother's words. Gross, disgusting, wrong... the words gnawed at his brain, and he could feel his breathing start to pick up as he reached his hands up to his face where the scar was his reflection mimicking his actions. He felt his tears his face stinging the cut below his eye as they dripped into the water creating small creases.

He reached down into the water and splashed his hand through the reflection watching as the water began to ripple and distort the figure staring below. He stood up wiping the tears from his face. He didn't blame anyone for the way he felt. He didn't even blame his mother who he imagined was sitting on her couch right now not even thinking about all the parell she was putting her son through.

He thought about the conversation he had with Bill the night before *'Don't think about it... Just be yourself everything will be fine.'* Bill had said with a smile on his face. The thing was Eddie didn't know how to be himself. His whole life he had been *'Bills best friend'* or *'The Gay kid from Derry.'* Nobody really ever asked him who he was, who Eddie Kaspbrak was. He didn't know.

Just as he was about to start back to Bill's house deciding that being here created too many unhappy thoughts he heard a rustling in the trees, and a faint voice could be heard.

"Hey Ed's," the voice said and he turned around to see Richie standing behind some trees a few feet away from him. His voice was soft and his eyes were filled with sympathy. That slightly bothered Eddie who had seen that look many times throughout his life, but he shook it off happy to see Richie was there. "You didn't come back, and I got nervous. Bill said that you would probably be here." Richie started walking towards him slowly as if he was approaching a hurt puppy.

"Richie it's okay to come over and sit by me. I don't bite." He chuckled sniffing a little wiping the last of his tears from his face. He

hoped that Richie didn't notice his red eyes that he could feel were swelling up from crying.

Richie sat down next to him and sighed loudly. Eddie could see out of the corner of his eye that Richie was folding his hands together. He looked like a dad that was about to give his son a pep talk. "It's so pretty out here," Richie said looking around at everything around them. The breeze from earlier had stopped creating a silence. Even the water seemed to be still as the two boys sat in silence looking around.

This lasted a few minutes before Richie spoke up again obviously not comfortable with how quiet it was. "Do you want to talk about it?" Richie finally spoke his voice echoing in the vast area. "Uhh, what do you mean?" Eddie asked trying to sound as casual as he could without it being suspicious. Richie looked at him one of his eyebrows raising a smirk across his face.

"Oh come on you might think that you're a good liar, but trust me I see right through you Spaghetti Man." He poked Eddie's side which caused Eddie to flinch a slight smiling on his face. "See there's that smile I love just stunning." Richie gushed sliding closer to Eddie. Their bodies were touching slightly which caused Eddie to feel a warmth spread throughout his body. Even when his mind was in total chaos Richie could make him feel at home. It was something that he could do perfectly.

Eddie sighed realizing that he had to tell Richie what was going on or he would figure out from Bill. He was never one to bottle up his feelings always being the type of person to explode on Bill or Mike when something went wrong. After a good rant session, he always felt better, but this was different. This wasn't about some dumb high school drama, this was real life.

He grabbed Richie's hand his fingers entangling with Richie's long ones as he looked up at the boy next to him for the first time since he had joined him. "You know how I talked to my mom after you, Bill, and Stan left the house?" Eddie's words came out quietly almost unheard. Richie nodded his head slowly his eyes never leaving Eddie.

"Well one thing led to another and during our conversation, I

admitted to her that I was gay. Officially.” He looked down shifting around the rocks with his feet. “And...?” Richie said hesitantly, and Eddie could feel his eyes lingering on him before looking back away. Despite this, he never let go of his hand.

Eddie shifted around on the rocks uncomfortably not wanting to tell Richie what happened. All his life people had looked down at him as this small weak little boy. He didn't want Richie to do the same. Even, so he knew he had to tell him. Eddie brought his hand up under his eye and brushed across the scar that was forming across his face. What used to be bright red color had now turned into a mixture of purple and black under his eye.

Richie's face morphed into a confused look before his eyes widened with realization. “Did she.. No she didn't.” Richie moved closer to Eddie lifting his head by the chin gently. Eddie could see the soft look in Richie's eye. It wasn't pity, but more of a concern that laced through his stare.

He didn't say anything but brought a shaky hand up to Eddie's face cupping his chin with his hand. He gently brushed his thumb over the cut. He didn't have to say anything. The gesture in itself said everything that needed to be said. Eddie's face sank into Richie's hand and he closed his eyes trying to stop the tears from streaming down his face.

His lips were quivering in the cold weather, and Richie moved his thumb against them noticing that they were turning purple. “Eddie you're freezing come here.” Richie took off his jacket and wrapped it around the small boy pulling him in close.

“You know you're one of the strongest people I've ever met.” Eddie pulled himself in nuzzling his hair in Richie's neck. “I don't feel like that,” he sniffed wiping his eye. Richie looked down at Eddie “Eds trust me you're the bravest most strong and may I add the sexiest person that I have ever known.” Richie winked, and Eddie let out a giggle wrapping his arms around Richie.

“You just have to find that confidence yourself, forget about your mother who cares about that bitch!” he put his hands through Eddie's hair and kissed his forehead lightly. The two sat in comfortable

silence their arms wrapped around each other. So much was unspoken between the two. Richie didn't know the depth of how horrible Eddie's past was, and Eddie didn't feel like rehashing it all and that was okay.

They had each other now.

Eddie knew what Richie was saying was right he did lack self-confidence, but that was something that was going to take time and he needed to figure it out himself. No one could give him that confidence, not Richie, not Bill not anyone just himself.

"Hey darlin' we have to get going," Richie said in an awful southern accent standing on his feet putting out a hand for Eddie to grab. Eddie rolled his eyes standing up. He laced his fingers through Richie's, and the two started walking back towards Bills.

## 8. Shots, Mistakes, and Heartbreak

### Summary for the Chapter:

A few drinks make for one crazy night for Eddie Kaspbrak.... who knew he would kissing more than one person.

### Notes for the Chapter:

I used a small scene from 'Heathers the Musical' so props if you understand it ;). I wanted to make this chapter a little more fun (since the last two were sad) and give off the allusion that they were drunk that why it's so choppy. However, with some help from MY BESTIE @propertyofnooneoops this story ends really.... well you'll see.

“Okay okay okay so it’s salt, and then lime, and then SHOT,” Eddie yelled at the top of his lungs standing on Bills kitchen counter. His arms were flailing in the air as he continued to jump around causing the counter to shake underneath him. One hand was full of salt which was falling all overlooking similar to the white snow as he fell from his hands. A lime was between his teeth and Richie was holding a shot just below him.

“No, it salt then shot-” Bill interrupted slurring his words together obviously a little tipsy.

“YOU’RE DOING IT WRONG!” Stan yelled out loud from the corner of the room where he was sitting on the ground his head against the cabinet.

“Wait really because I feel great.” Eddie slurred swaying around to the music that was playing. “Richie hand me that shot I got this!”

“You got it, babe!” Richie yelled jumping up on the counter stumbling a little spilling some of the drink. “Here you go.” He reached out his arm to Eddie spilling more of the drink onto the counter.

“RICHIE! You spilled half of the drink!” Eddie yelled at him letting out a giggle at the carelessness of his boyfriend. The four had decided that since it was there last night in Derry they would have a few drinks. Well, a few turned into four or five... and now Eddie was plastered.

“We should play a game,” Stan mumbled from his spot on the ground. He was currently laying on the floor with his head still against the kitchen cabinet his legs sprawled out. Three bowls of chips were laid out in front of him, and his usually clean appearance was ruined by an orange stain on his shirt. Eddie wasn’t sure where that was from. He shrugged looking down at Richie who was now mixing a bunch of different liquids into a pitcher.

“What sort of game?” Bill asked slumping down next to Stan. Eddie watched as Bill started playing with Stans' hair his fingers wrapping around the brown curls. His eyes widening as they sprung back. Eddie laughed to himself at how amusing the whole scene was. Bill started patting Stan’s head. “You have such nice hair you know that. Just wow wow wow... woo” Stan put his hand over Bills mouth.

“You know I love you Billy but please stop.” Stan slurred picking up the bowl of chips and putting a handful in his mouth. Bills eyes widened and he grabbed Stan’s face causing him to spit out half the chips. “Oh come on you got chips all over my shirt!” Stan complained trying to rub the half eaten chips off of his shirt.

“Don’t worry Stanley you already look like a fuckin mess. Am I right Eds.” Richie nudged him and then put his attention back on what he was doing. “Eds, Eddie, My love, Baby you have to try this!” Richie explained scooping out some of the thick liquid with a ladle. Eddie looked down at the contents and just about barfed. “Richie what is in this?” he covered his face to avoid smelling it again.

“Well, I put tomatoes, barley, milk, and lots of vodka.” He picked up the pitcher and took a long chug. Eddie watched in disgust as Richie’s adam's apple bobbed up and down while the thick chunky liquid poured out of the corners of his mouth.

“YES, YOU DID YES YOU DID!” Eddie’s attention was drawn yet again to Bill who was now straddling Stan yelling in his face. “I heard

you say it! With own two ears.” Bill was grabbing into his ears now staring down at Stan who looked completely uninterested in the conversation, and honestly looked half asleep.

“Guys I think we should play that game that Stan was mentioning earlier,” Eddie called out over the commotion. “As long as it involves you and alcohol I’m in,” Richie called picking up Eddie and slinging him over his shoulder. “Come on lovebirds!” Richie called out to Bill and Stan who were both clearly not listening. He carried Eddie into the living room.

“Can you put me down now Rich fuck my stomach hurts!” Eddie yelled kicking Richie’s back. Richie set him down onto the couch and sat down next to him. “Oh you know you love it,” Richie took a swig from his drink and offered it to Eddie.

Eddie took it finishing the rest as he let the liquid burn down his throat. He looked over at Richie who had his mouth open obviously impressed by his boyfriend’s abilities to drink. Eddie was very straight and narrow never really having anything other than a few coolers in his life. So having downed an entire solo cup of mainly vodka was impressive.

“Well that was the hottest thing I’ve ever seen,” Richie exclaimed throwing his hands into the air settling back onto the couch. “No seriously out of everything I’ve ever seen in my entire existence that topped the cake,” Eddie smirked moving closer to Richie his lips just brushing his boyfriends. “Oh yeah?” he whispered seductively eyes never leaving Richie’s lips. “Wait till you see what else I can do.” Honestly, Eddie had no idea what he was doing, but with the few shots he had taken that night, he felt like a reborn porn star.... and also very dizzy.

He brought his lips down to Richie’s neck kissing it gently before nipping his ear. Richie exhaled slowly his breath hot on Eddie’s skin causing a shiver to run down his spine.

“Eds I-”

But Eddie reached up and pulled him down, the rest of his words lost against his lips. He kissed him gently, carefully, but it wasn’t

gentleness that Eddie wanted, not now, not with the alcohol running through his blood, and he knotted his fists in Richie's shirt, pulling him harder against his chest so that he was laying on top of him. He could feel Richie's hard on against his legs and he groaned softly, low in his throat. Completely forgetting that Stan and Bill were just a few feet away in the room next to them.

They continued to kiss moving around on the couch Eddie's hands tangled in Richie's hair as their lips moved in sync never breaking as they moved against each other. Just as Eddie was reaching for Richie's shirt he felt him pulling back. "I'm sorry Eddie I just I have to--" Richie stood up hurriedly, and stumbled his way into the kitchen. Eddie noticed that his long legs were shaking and it looked like he had lost half of his height at the way he was keeling over.

Richie disappeared from his sight, and Eddie couldn't help but feel that the moment that the two had was lost. He stood up quickly grabbing at his pounding head wincing at the sharp pain. His vision was blurred as he made his way unsteadily to the kitchen. Rounding the corner sharply giggling to himself as he almost hit the wall. The thoughts of his pounding head suddenly forgotten at the vile sight in front of him.

He stopped as soon as he saw it not wanting to walk into the scene any further. Richie was there alright but sitting on the wet hardwood floor before him was a large pool of vomit, some if it still trailing from his lips, viscous and opaque. Eddie looked up from the floor to see Richie kneeling over holding his stomach the caustic fluid coating his mouth. He looked up his eyes looking pained probably from the stench as he opened his mouth and said "Hey Eds, sorry about the--

He was cut off again by chunks of partially digested food that he had eaten earlier as they spewed out of his mouth. His face was white and his forehead was dripping with sweat. The pungent stench invaded Eddie's nostrils and Richie heaved even though there was obviously nothing left to puke.

Extremely grossed out by the whole scene in front of him, and feeling a little woozy himself Eddie plugged his nose braving something that might even be scary than facing his mother. He looked down at the pool of vomit one more time before deciding that he could do this.

He stepped over the puddle wincing at the slight wetness that he felt through his socks as he reached out his hand to pull Richie up on his feet. "I think you should lay down babe, and get some sleep." Richie groaned holding onto his stomach clearly out of it as they made their around the opposite corner. Eddie ignored the thought in the back of his mind that Bill was going to be pissed that Richie threw up on his mom's new floors.

Going out to a buffet before you get plastered was not a good idea. He made a mental note to go upstairs and tell Bill what had happened to avoid any inevitable yelling tomorrow morning. "Here Richie," Eddie turned around to hand him a blanket, but Richie was already fast asleep snoring slightly. He smiled wrapping the blanket around him tucking it in so that he was warm.

Despite his pale green face Eddie couldn't help but think Richie looked beautiful in the dim light. He reached out cupping his face and stroking it with his thumb smiling down at the boy who he cared for so much. Maybe it was the alcohol that was still coursing through him or the fact that he felt giddy almost euphoric, but he thought that he could possibly be in.....

"EDDIE MY BROTHER MY PAL," Bill interrupted his thoughts, and he tore his eyes away from Richie to look over at a very drunk Bill who was swaying to music that wasn't playing.

He sighed to himself not excited to deal with another drunk person tonight. "Okay Bill let's go upstairs to your bed," Eddie insisted slinging his arm around Bill who was now pressing his face against Eddie's neck. "Come on Eddie dance with me plllleaaasee," Bill whined his lips pouting. Eddie started to drag Bill across the floor the lanky boy's feet dragged on the floor behind him as he continued to protest.

"NO BILL we are going to bed. Where is Stan?" Eddie snapped as he continued to drag Bill's limp body up the stairs. It was growing increasingly difficult with the height difference between the two. "He fell asleep on the bathroom floor in the middle of--

"WOAH WOAH TMI okay that is enough of that." Eddie cut him off as Bill began to cackle his face turning into a huge grin. They made their way to the top of the stairs Bill finally cooperating by standing

on his feet. However, that didn't stop him from stopping every few seconds down the hallway to ogle at pictures of his family, and even kissing his mom's portrait on the cheek saying how much he loved her.

As they finally stepped into Bill's room Eddie laid down on Bill's bed feeling sweat drip down his face from dragging the drunk boy up the stairs. It reminded him that he really needed to start going to the gym with how out of shape he was.

He looked up at the ceiling thinking over the events that happened tonight and the entire week completely forgetting the puke that was probably staining Bill's floor downstairs. He felt his head starting to pound again, and he groaned as rolled over onto his stomach burying his head in the blankets.

"How are you doing on this lovely night?" Bill said sweetly batting his eyes at Eddie clearly still drunk. He laid down and placed his head on Eddie's shoulder. This didn't even phase Eddie since Bill was a cuddly drunk, and he had spent many nights with drunk Bill just like this. They both sat in silence with the only sound in the room being the heavy breathing of Bill. It reminded Eddie of a vacuum cleaner, and he shuttered thinking of Sunday morning chores with his mother.

"Did you have a fun week," Bill broke the silence his voice echoing in the large room, and ringing through Eddie's ear as he was very close to him. Eddie opened his mouth then paused thinking over what he was going to tell Bill. Knowing he wouldn't remember much of this in the morning.

He sighed before deciding to just spill everything that was going on in his head. "Well my mom hit me the first day we were here for reasons I can't explain," he spoke dryly his eyes never leaving the ceiling. "So my week was just fantastic," he said voice dripping with sarcasm. Bill sat up looking down at Eddie the expression on his face looking angry as his forehead was creasing and his eyes turned into slits.

"What a BITCH," he yelled looking down at Eddie his expression not changing. "Bill you need to be quiet," Eddie winced wishing Bill wasn't so loud. "You know what Eddie you're the best dang person

I've ever met and you don't deserve her." Bill scoffed slumping back down closer to Eddie nuzzling his face into his neck.

"Thanks, Bill," he mumbled. "No problem! You're awesome Eddie...." Bill continued to ramble. "You're smart, talented, funny, handsome and adorable." With each word, he said he poked Eddie's cheek causing a giggle from Eddie. "Stop Bill that tickles," he laughed reaching out his hands to stop Bill from continuing. "See Eddie look how cute you are you deserve the absolute world," Bill said with glee a grin still on his face. The two looked at each other for a moment and the smile faded from Eddie's face as he realized where Bill's eyes had been wondering throughout their entire conversation.

The tension in the air between the two began to feel thick as Bill continued to stare at Eddie.

"You know I always thought we would be good together," Bill spoke quietly now looking down at Eddie moving closer. He could feel Bill's hot breath on his face, and it reminded him of when they were younger, the moments he had sat awake at night dreaming of hearing those words. Bill Denbrough was his first crush that was for sure, but it was only a childhood crush nothing more. More of a sexual awakening than an actual love.

He looked back up at Bill who's eyes had softened as he continued glancing at Eddie's lips.

He didn't know who initiated it first, but one second he was looking at Bill and the next they were kissing. They kissed slowly at first but soon picked up the pace as things began to grow heavy. He felt Bill's hand reaching up to pull his shirt over his head, and they let go for only a second then continued sloppy, drunkenly. Eddie could feel Bill's spit covering his lips as his tongue coated his mouth. He bit down on Bill's lip and heard a moan in response as Bill deepened the kiss biting back onto Eddie's now swollen lips. The sharp graze of Bill's teeth snapped Eddie out of the moment. This didn't feel right he felt nothing. No spark, no fireworks exploding in his brain, not even butterflies in his stomach. It wasn't like Richie, no it wasn't anything like *Richie.... Oh shit... Richie.*

He pulled off of Bill standing up before tripping on his way towards

the door. "I'm sorry Bill I just I can't..... I...." He reached for the handle making his way into the hallway. He could feel wet tears burning down his face as they soaked his skin.

*What had he done.*

## 9. Pancakes & Guilt

Eddie collapsed down onto the hallway floor. Tears streaming down his face. They landed on his tan skin which couldn't be seen in the dim light of the hallway.

Thoughts of what he had just done overtook his mind as he sobbed into his hand's. Snot was dripping from his nose which he ignored. He laid down into the ground curling himself into a ball and as he did he began to doze off, into a dreamless oblivion.

It seemed like seconds but when Eddie woke up he looked at the clock in the hallway realizing that it was in fact hours since he had fallen asleep. As he started to become more awake he realized he was hungover, the inner surface of his skull pulsing like a single, giant nerve being chewed by some ruminant animal. He cringed holding onto his head as images from last night shot through his head.

*Richie drunk... kissing... Bill.....*

He reached up and touched his lips which felt swollen. He knew he had kissed Bill, but the memory was blurred. It definitely was not a dream and he felt tears forming in his eyes threatening to spill down his face again. They burned at his eyes as the realizations of his actions set in.

Drunk or not he cheated on Richie, and it made him sick to his stomach. Literally sick to his stomach Eddie thought as he ran into Bills bathroom puking into the toilet his face scrunching and his hands shaking as he stood up making his way to Bills room.

He opened the door letting the light fill the room. He saw Bill laying on his back his legs dangling over the bed. His eyes were shut and Eddie could hear him snoring softly. He was still shaking, and he had to wake up Bill somehow because he was starting to panic. His heart was hammering in his chest, and he was pacing back and forth along the front of Bill's bed.

It was currently 7 am not exactly the time that Bill liked to be woken up, but this was an urgent matter.

"Bill!" Eddie hissed quietly hoping his voice didn't carry through the vents in the living room. The last thing he needed was Richie and Stan to hear this conversation. "BILL," Eddie said a bit louder than the last time, and he was greeted with a groan from the boy sleeping on the bed. Bill rolled over onto his side mumbling something about how his head hurt. He reached out to the clock on his bedside table and then glared over at Eddie.

"Seriously Eddie it's 7 am can you fuck off..." he pulled his blanket over his head shielding himself from the hallway light. Eddie loved his best friend he really did, but today was not the day he would be willing to deal with a grumpy hung over Bill. They had to discuss the events from the night before, and figure out what to do.

"I'm sorry Bill, but we have to talk." Eddie reached for the covers and pulled them out from over Bill who hissed in response curling himself into a ball.

"What Eddie! What is so important that we HAVE to talk about now. We have at least a 6-hour car ride back to school." Eddie was starting to grow angry at the fact that Bill apparently had no idea what was going on. He didn't even have a bit of remorse from what happened only a few hours ago. He tried to stay calm though as he stood crossing his arms staring at the boy who was still curled up in his bed.

"Fine fine we don't have to discuss the fact that we **Made. Out.** last night" Eddie hissed again leaving the emphasis on the last two words. He tapped his foot waiting for Bill to respond as he glanced over at the open door. He walked over and shut it turning around after to see Bill sitting straight up his hair a mess and his eyes squinting in confusion. Eddie noticed the wrinkles on his forehead as he looked at him dumbly.

He leaned against the door waiting for the memory to hit Bill. It was clear when it did because his eyes grew wide, and he looked up at Eddie. Worry and fear crossing his growingly pale face. Eddie nodded slowly biting down on his lip trying to figure out how to bring about this conversation.

"So we made out last night," Bill said slowly looking down his eyes

briefly glancing at Eddie. Clearly, he was nervous about the topic as well and Eddie hoped he was feeling guilty. "We didn't have---"

"NO" Eddie cut Bill off mid-sentence his voice raising, "We didn't go any further than making out I stopped it after that. I didn't want it to go any further," Bill nodded his head fiddling with his hands. The two sat in silence tension filling the quiet room as the only sound being heard was the ticking of Bills hallway clock. Eddie felt as though he would have rather been sitting at church with his mother and her homophobic friends then be here with Bill. Their friendship that he and Bill had was now changed forever, and Eddie had just now realized that. This was going to take time, and they didn't have time. In only a few short hours they would be sharing a dorm room again.

"Do you regret it?" Bill squeaked cutting the silence in the room with a question that Eddie thought had an obvious answer. He looked up at Bill about to answer his question when he saw the look on Bills face. His normally light brown eyes seeming to have turned a shade darker as they were filling with tears. They slid down his freckled face. His lip was quivering, and the look he was giving Eddie was one he had never seen cross Bill's face before. For as long as he had known him Bill had never looked as wretched as he did right now. It made Eddie feel almost sorry for the boy, and he didn't know why.

"Of course I do Bill. I have Richie, and you have Stan," he paused looking at Bill straight in the eye. "What we did was wrong Bill," he tried to sound stern, but it was difficult when he was staring into eyes that were so pained. "I know Eddie its just...", Bill said in-between staggered breaths, he looked up at him his hands now shaking tears staining his t-shirt as he continued to cry seeming unbothered by it now. "I just..." he started again "I don't regret what we did."

Eddie held his breath eyes not leaving Bill. "Bill..." Eddie started but was cut off when he felt a push against his back, and the door shoved him onto the ground as it was being opened.

"GOOD MORNING BITCHES!" Richie yelled his hands swinging from side to side as he entered the room the door slamming behind him. "OH, my goodness Eds my love I am so sorry I didn't know you were sitting there." Richie reached out his arms and grabbed onto Eddie pulling him up over his shoulder similar to how he had the night

before. "Rich put me down!" Eddie squealed kicking him. "If you say so," Richie said swinging a giggling Eddie onto Bill's bed and laying down next to him. Eddie looked at his boyfriend's smiling face eyes lit with joy. He had always been a morning person, and that was very evident.

Richie kissed him on the forehead "Where have you been cutie I missed you!" He giggled, and guilt suddenly rushed over Eddie as he glanced nervously over at Bill who was wiping his eyes. His tear stained face still very noticeable with how swollen his eyes were. Richie followed Eddie's eyes over to Bill. "Woah Big Bill don't get so emotional I know you haven't seen me in a few hours, but honestly I'm nothing special." Richie laughed obviously uncomfortable at Bill's state.

"Oh don't worry Chee he is just upset because he is going to miss Georgie," Eddie looked over at Bill raising his eyebrows. "Right Bill," he said through gritted teeth. He honestly didn't know what he was doing, but he knew this was not the moment Richie had to find out about what had happened last night in the very spot they were sitting. Not to mention the conversation he needed to have with Bill later about his last statement.

"Yeah right," Bill said quickly his eyes darting from Richie to Eddie. "Okay weirdos," Richie said awkwardly squeezing Eddie's waist tighter as he nuzzled into his neck.

"So where's Stan the Man?" Richie asked looking at Bill. Bill looked dazed his eyes glossy as if deep in thought looking over at the door. "Ahh not sure I'll go look for him." He stumbled over to the door opening it disappearing into the hallway. Eddie felt himself let go of his breath as if Bill leaving the room could help him finally breathe again. It didn't stop the deep pit in his throat from constricting every time he looked at Richie, but it at least he could breathe slightly.

"Last night was crazy, I don't remember half of it." Richie laughed looking down at Eddie his arms still tangled around his side. Eddie stared blankly at the wall. "Yeah it was wasn't it." Richie reached for Eddie's chin pushing his face up to look at him. "I don't remember much, but I do remember you taking care of me Eds," Richie said softly a smile across his face. He leaning in to press a kiss to his lips.

He looked down at the smaller boy his deep-set eyes studying Eddie's face. "You're so beautiful you know that?"

Eddie blushed, but this created an even bigger guilt, he felt sick to his stomach.

"You are too Rich," he said, "but there's something I have to tell you."

Richie looked down at him his eyebrows raising "You can tell me anything Eds." Eddie glanced nervously up at Richie knowing that what he said would change everything. Everything they had built up the past few months, plus who knew if Richie would ever trust him again. The number one thing that was important for a relationship was trust, and Eddie had broken that. He felt tears starting to build up in his eyes again as he started to croak out words. "Rich I... I...." He started then stopped as the tears threatened to flow down his face.

If there was one problem Eddie had it was that he was an overthinker. Everything in his life even the smallest of inconveniences was a huge deal. So this was starting to send his mind into overdrive, as his hands began to shake.

"Shhh shhh," Richie looked down at the broken boy and gently cupped his face in his hands rubbing his thumb against his soft skin. "Whatever you have to say will be okay. You can tell me anything Eds." At that Eddie began to cry. It was more than crying, it was a kind of desolate sobbing. Something that comes from a person drained of all hope. The pain that flowed from him was as palpable and his hands felt frigid. He was struggling to keep his tears silent, looking up at Richie not ready to admit what he had done. Richie reached around him pulling him closer allowing the boy to curl up into his arms. He didn't say a word letting the boy's cries be heard echoing around the room.

The two sat like that for a while before Richie spoke again his voice quiet and calming, "Whatever it is that you're upset about you can tell me when you're ready okay." Eddie nodded into Richie's shirt not being able to look up at his boyfriend. "How about we go downstairs and get some breakfast? Does that sound like a good idea?" Richie said pressing a kiss to Eddie's forehead. He looked up at Richie guilt

flooding through his body. *What did he do to deserve someone like Richie?*

Oh, he knew what he did. He went and fucked it up by kissing his best friend. Could he be any more of a horrible person? Honestly no he might as well lock himself in a cave and live alone for the rest of his goddamn life.

Richie stood up bouncing on his feet, his black curls falling down onto his face as he tilted his head down to look at Eddie. "You coming?" He asked his voice filled with obvious concern. "Yeah I'll be down I just need a minute to myself. "Sounds good baby I'll see you down there." Richie gave him and a small smile as he headed out closing the door softly behind him.

Eddie sighed burying his face in his hands. He stood up walking to the mirror that was attached to Bill's door and looked at himself. His eyes were swollen, he looked rather pale which was odd because he was naturally very tan. Not to mention his hair was a mess sticking up in different directions. He looked like hell.

The reflection staring back him seemed to be a stranger. He ran his hands through his hair and picked up his shirt from the ground next to him. He shivered remembering why he had taken the shirt off in the first place. He slipped it on, opened the door, and sluggishly made his way down the daunting hallway for what he was sure was going to be the most uncomfortable meal of his life.

"Eddie! Stan is making us pancakes, and I am positive this is the best day of my life." Richie yelled from the kitchen as he saw Eddie walking in to sit down. Bill was sitting across from Richie a dazed look across his face as he stared down at the table. Stan was concentrating way too much on pouring evenly shaped pancakes on a skillet. His tongue was sticking out in deep focus, and Eddie couldn't help but smirk at the boy. Stan set down the bowl he was pouring and looked down at the steaming circles.

He smiled to himself obviously pleased with his work, and finally looked up to see Eddie. "Good morning Eddie hope you like pancakes." He smiled cheerfully whistling a tune of a song that Eddie was pretty sure he knew. He wasn't sure what the name of it was

maybe 'Welcome to the Black Parade' but he wasn't sure.

He smiled weakly back at Stan guilt filling his body once again. "uhh yeah they're good." He said awkwardly trying to sound as normal as he could. "Personally waffles are way better, and anyone who says differently is wrong." Richie piped up as he stood up walking towards Stan. Stan ignored him only rolling his eyes until Richie stuck his finger into the batter and licked the contents off of his finger. Eddie shook his head knowing that Stan was going to flip out. If there was one thing Stan was most concerned with it was messing up his perfect routine, and Richie sticking his hands in the batter he made from scratch would never fly.

"HEY," Stan yelled snatching the bowl from Richie's hands who only laughed sticking his tongue out. He reached for the bowl again only for Stan to glare at him moving around the kitchen the bowl over his head. "First of all you're wrong Richie pancakes are way better than waffles," Stan started still moving around the kitchen Richie following him like a little puppy grabbing for the bowl. "Second do you know how many germs you just got in our batter. I actually read an article recently that said that if you put even a finger in it ruins the whole thing and can cause sickness, and---"

"BLAH BLAH BLAH Stan I love you, but please stop." Richie cut him off his hands on his hips looking at Stan dumbly. Stan stared at Richie for a second then back down at his batter. He sighed looking back up at the boy. "You're lucky that I need friends otherwise I would never tolerate the stuff you do." Richie's face lit up as he made his way back to his seat at the table. "You would be nothing without me Stan the Man and you know it." Stan rolled his eyes again going back to the pancakes, but Eddie saw a slight smile on his face. He knew Stan cared very much for Richie. It was the same brotherly love that he and Bill have.... or had... Eddie wasn't quite sure. His gut started to hurt again as he thought about it.

He ignored the thought and glanced over at Bill who hadn't even looked up from the table ignoring everyone in the room. *Serves him right* Eddie thought, but then shook it off knowing that he too was at fault for what happened. He couldn't blame it all on Bill.

Stan set down a plate of pancakes on the table and smiled satisfied

with himself. "Looks good Stan," Eddie said before grabbing a plate for himself. Stan gave him a warm smile and... that feeling was back. He ignored it, and the four sat in silence enjoying the breakfast that Stan had made for them.

"So I was thinking we could leave to go back after we get done eating does that sound good to everyone?" Stan asked looking around the table, and then down at Bill who was next to him. They all nodded in response except Bill who was too busy pushing food around on his plate. "Hey, Bill what's going on?" Stan asked nudging the lanky boy. Eddie tensed at the question, and he felt his heart rate speed up. "He is just going to miss his brother," Richie called out through a mouth full of food, and it sprayed everywhere on the table.

Stan gave him a look of disgust as if to say '*Seriously?*' before looking back down at Bill. "It's going to be okay Bill," Stan wrapped his arm around the boy's shoulder squeezing him in. "Just think once we get back to school you and Eddie can finally meet our two best friends!" Stan beamed looking up at Richie who was already staring at Eddie. "Two best friends?" Eddie's voice squeaked nervously. "Yeah our two friends Ben and Bev they're coming up for the weekend we have been waiting--" Stan continued, but Eddie couldn't hear what he was saying his mind blocking out everything as he stared at Bill.

Bill stared back fear in his eyes and the two shared an unspoken conversation. If anyone had been in the room at that moment with the four boys they would have sensed something was off, but Stan and Richie seemed to not be realizing a thing. Whether that was good or bad Eddie didn't know. "You ready to get going, Eddie?" Richie asked nudging Eddie out of his silent conversation.

He nodded slowly standing up to follow the three outside to the car. He felt Richie's hand wrap around his own, and the taller boy smiled down at him.

Eddie felt sick to his stomach, he wasn't just afraid for him and Bill, but more for what damage that this news was going to cause to Richie and Stan. The road ahead of them was a long and bleak one, and all he could do was prepare for the worst.

## 10. A little less bleak

### Notes for the Chapter:

This chapter starts out slow... but trust me it's a must-read because the ending is super important for the plot. The next part will be coming out very soon so stay tuned.

The entire car ride back wasn't as bad as Eddie expected. Other than the gross feeling in his gut (which he ignored) the ride was quite entertaining. Between Richie and Stan's constant bickering which was hilarious, and Bill looking like he wanted to die Eddie was having a great time.

"How about we play Truth or Dare?" Richie called out from the seat next to him where he was currently sitting cross-legged. Much to Stan's dismay Richie's seat belt was not on, and after a long discussion about how he was going to die if they got into a car accident, Stan had declared he didn't care if Richie died. Even though his eyes were filled with worry as he kept glancing at Richie to make sure he was okay.

"What are we middle schoolers?" Eddie sassed back at Richie folding his arms across his chest.

"Yeah, Richie why would we want to play truth or dare?" Stan turned around to look at the two.

"Come on Eds it would be so much fun!" Richie pouted turning towards Eddie. He curled his lip and put his hands folded up to his chest looking like a little kid begging for candy.

"Please, I'm soooo bored." Eddie shook his head smirking at his boyfriend as he begged. He looked adorable.

"How about if we play truth or dare, I'll give you something really special when we get back," Richie said seductively leaning into Eddie his eyebrows raising up and down. Eddie's face turned bright red at the thought as he stared at his boyfriend who was leaning in closer.

He grabbed onto Eddie's face and leaned into his ear.

"Trust me Eds it will be a night that you will never forget." Eddie felt hot under Richie's touch, and the guilt that had been bubbling in his stomach had just exploded inside of him.

"Richie if we play your dumb game will you stop acting like you and Eddie are the only people in this car because seriously it's getting uncomfortable." Stan hit Richie's foot which caused him to whip his head around.

"Oh, whatever Stanley like you wouldn't get turned on by us fucking." Eddie looked over at Stanley whose eyes were now blown up three times the size. "Beep Beep Richie," Stan said in disgust before turning back around to face the front of the car.

"He didn't say no," Richie whispered to Eddie and Eddie giggled.

"Okay so are we playing your dumb game or not?" Stan asked obviously wanting to change the subject although he didn't turn around to face Richie. Eddie noticed that he and Bill were holding hands and it made his stomach turn. Not because he was jealous *hell no* he never ever would like Bill *ever*, but it was just odd judging by Bills straight face, and what he had told Eddie earlier.

"Yeah let's play, I'll go first." Richie twisted himself forward placing his legs on the floor and leaning as close to Stan as he could. "So Stanley, Truth or dare?"

"Truth," Stan said almost immediately clearly not wanting to pick dare which was probably the best idea judging that Richie was the one who was asking.

"Hmmm okay, what was your first time with Big Bill like? Does he really live up to the nickname?" Stan looked over at Bill searching for some emotion in the boys face, but Bill stared blankly at the road. Stan turned around, "We haven't uhh... gotten that far yet." He looked ashamed and Eddie felt bad for the boy. "We have only gone as far as making out," Stan said his face turning red at the mention of his and Bills intimacy. Eddie suddenly felt very uncomfortable and his palms began to sweat at the thought that he and Bill had done the same

amount as Stan and Bill had.

"Is he any good?" Richie asked prying more into Stan's love life. "That was not part of the question," Stan said sternly and he turned back to Bill. "So Bill Truth or Dare?"

"Truth," Bill spoke up quietly his voice monotone. Eddie was pretty sure it was the first time that he had spoken since the four had gotten in the car, and in all honesty, Eddie was totally fine with it.

"Hmm," Stan thought putting his hand on his chin as if he was thinking very hard about what question to ask. Bill still hadn't let his eyes linger from the road seeming unbothered by everything that was happening in the car.

"What is the worst lie you ever told you ever said to your parents?" Eddie felt himself breathe something he didn't know he was holding in. He didn't know why he was so nervous for Bill's question. "LAME!" Richie yelled out cupping his hands up by his face. "Seriously Stan think of something better than that."

"Fine, how many people have you kissed or made out with?" Stan said glaring at Richie for making him change his question. Eddie felt his heart rate speed up at the question, but Stan hadn't asked for names just a number so he felt safe for now. The car was silent as the three waited for Bill to answer the question.

"Three," Bill responded. One syllable, one single word, but it felt like a shot to Eddie's heart. He was one of those three because he knew for a fact Bill had only ever kissed Stan and Audra. So unless Bill had kissed someone else that he was counting Eddie had to be the third. They all sat in silence as Eddie silently prayed to a God he wasn't sure he even believed in to not have anyone else in the car ask any further questions.

"Wait, three?" Stan asked his face scrunching up in confusion. "I thought you only kissed me and Audra." Eddie tensed up, and he saw Bill squeeze his hands on the wheel his knuckles turning white as he looked back at Eddie in the mirror. Eddie glared back at Bill trying to tell him with his eyes not to say anything. He was going to tell Richie, but not now. This was not the time, and it definitely was not

the circumstances that either of them wanted.

"Uhh yeah, I forgot I kissed someone else at a party back in high school." Bill lied his eyes moving from the mirror back to the road. "What party?" Stan questioned his voice growing defensive, and Eddie fidgeted in his seat suddenly feeling uncomfortable again. "Yeah Bill what party?" Richie chimed in nudging Eddie and smiling. He gave Richie a weak smile back and then faced the window wanting to avoid the situation altogether.

*You could jump out of the car right now. You could literally open the door, and jump out, and then you will never have to face the fact that you're a fucking slut.* His thoughts taunted him as he continued to avoid the conversation.

"I don't remember much from that night I was pretty drunk. Right, Eddie?" Eddie snapped his head around and cursed Bill under his breath for bringing him into the conversation. But if Bill wanted to make up a string of lies to dig them into a deeper hole he guessed he would go along with it.

"Yeah," Eddie laughed weakly as if he was remembering the distant memory which was nonexistent since they had only been to one party in high school, and it was a birthday party for Mike.

"So you two went to a party, and... Bill made out with someone." Stan asked questioningly his tone obviously not believing the two. "Yep, that's what happened," Bill said looking back at Eddie in the mirror again his eyes finally showing something other than a blank expression. It was fear, Eddie wasn't sure about what, but it was there. His brown eyes were blown in size, and his forehead was creasing in worry. Something Eddie had seen only a few times, but this was the first time that Bill's fear had involved him directly.

"So Eddie I know for a fact you don't drink do you remember who Bill was making out with? Was it steamy? Girl or guy?" Richie asked his voice eager to know everything there was to know about this 'party' that the two had gone to.

"You don't have to answer th-that Ed-d-die," Bill spoke up his voice slurring as he was obviously nervous. "No please do answer that

Eddie," Stan spoke his voice sounding accusatory as he let go of Bill's hand to turn around and face Eddie.

Eddie felt like he was being put on the spot. He was never good at lying, and his mind was blank as he tried to think of something anything to say that wouldn't sound like a complete lie. He looked from Richie to Stan who were both staring at him waiting for his response, and he looked up at Bill keeping his eyes on him as he answered the question.

"I don't remember," Eddie deadpanned staring at Bill. "You don't remember?" Stan repeated. Eddie shook his head staring Stan in the eyes who had his eyebrows raised clearly not buying his obvious lie. He turned back around to the front and faced Bill now his eyes searching for some sort of explanation, but Bill continued to look forward as he bit down on his lower lip trying to avoid Stan's glare.

"Okay well, this got awkward fast," Richie said breaking the tension from the growlingly dark car. No one said anything as silence ensued into the darkness. The only sound is the rumbling of the tires as Bill's car hit bumps. Eddie wished that Stan would put on some music, but he knew that that would never happen as Stan claimed it was a 'distraction from the road.'

"We are going to talk about this when we get back," Stan said interrupting the silence in the car. He looked over at Bill who's entire body was tensing. His eyes had the same fear stricken gloss over them, and if Eddie could read his mind he would guess the boy would be thinking something along the lines of "oh fuck."

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Eddie shut the door of their dorm room and set his backpack down on his bed. After another hour in the car, he was feeling exhausted, but he wasn't going to sleep until he and Bill had the conversation that had been looming over there heads for the past twenty-four hours. Bill had bolted out of the car as soon as they had parked and he was now sitting on his bed headphones in eyes closed. No way he is getting out of this. He walked over to Bill and ripped the headphones out of his ears standing over him crossing his arms. Bill glared up at Eddie "Hey what was that for?" he complained putting

the headphones back into his ears.

"Are you seriously going to ask 'what was that for' are you kidding me, Bill." Bill ignored him turning his volume up on his headphones.

"FINE if you don't want to talk about it then I will," Eddie could hear his voice growing shriller with each word that he spoke, but he didn't care because he was mad. "For starters, I think it was very uncalled for that you said you didn't regret what we did. What do you mean you didn't regret it? We have been friends for years Bill YEARS." Eddie looked over at the boy, "Hell our parents have known each other since they were in college." Bill looked to be in shock as he was sitting stiffly on the bed watching Eddie's panic.

"What we did was wrong Bill. Plain and simple it was wrong. And then in the car, you lied again! You owe me an explanation, and I after you explain I am going to go over and tell Richie what we did because I love him, and he deserves a huge ass apology, and I deserve to be kicked to the curb." Eddie slumped down on his bed arms crossed as he stared at Bill waiting.

Bill looked up at Eddie his eyes glistening with tears, and the anger suddenly started to fade as he looked at the broken boy. Bill blinked back tears as they started to drip from his eyelids and slid down his cheeks soaking his blue shirt. He bit his lip tightly obviously in an attempt to hide any sound that threatened to escape from his mouth; Eddie's heart sank.

Bill's lower lip quivered as words slowly made their way out of his mouth. "You..." He began, yet what followed was engulfed in the tremors. "You... love him?"

shit had he really just said that out loud?

"I guess I do." Eddie looked down a smile written across his face, but it faded quickly when he remembered the conversation they were having. "That's not the point Bill," he crossed his arms looking over to the boy on the other side of the room. "Eddie what we did last night wasn't a regret for me." Bill paused fiddling with the ends of his headphones. "I like Stan sure, but I've always thought that in the end, we would be together." Eddie shifted uncomfortably on his bed

taking in everything Bill was saying.

"I know you love Richie," Eddie could see tears threatening to fall down the pale boys face again as he looked up.

"I see the way you look at him. Like he's the only person in the room." Bill's voice began to quiver and the tears flowed unchecked down his cheeks and dripped from his chin. "You've never looked at me like that," he sniffed. "No one has." Eddie stood up walking over to Bill, he looked down at the pained boy. His eyes looked so lost, so scared. After the rollercoaster of events that had happened Eddie didn't have time to process it all, but right now he was looking at his best friend. Someone who he had known his whole life who he shared everything with. He loved Bill, not in the way that he loved Richie, but as a best friend. And seeing your best friend looking completely broken was difficult.

Eddie wrapped an arm around Bill's shoulders and pulled him close, gently rubbing his arm. Despite the heaviness in his stomach still lingering, he felt at slightly better. Bill sunk into the warmth of his side, appreciative of the simple gesture. He sobbed silently into Eddie's arms, and even though they still had a lot to get through the future within the walls of the room seemed a little less bleak.

## 11. Guilty as Charged

### Summary for the Chapter:

Eddie has to decide whether he is going to confess to Richie or leave him in the dark.

### Notes for the Chapter:

hey, so its been a year....whats good?

After the stressful night, Eddie knew there was only one person who could give him good advice. Bill was currently sleeping wrapped up in a ball on his bed. He obviously was not going to talk to Stan or Richie and he wasn't gonged to call his mother. He had to call Mike. Although Mike was the same age as Eddie and Bill he always seemed to have the wisdom of someone who was

"wise beyond his years" as many people would say. He was sort of like the "Dad" of their little friend group. As they grew up he was always one to keep them in line, but since college had started it was obvious that Eddie and Bill couldn't survive without Mike.

"Seriously," Mike had said his voice laced with disappointment.

"I leave you two for four months and this is what happens?" Eddie gripped the phone tighter as Mike continued. He told Eddie how dumb it was to get drunk, how he better go tell Richie straight away, and how he needed to talk to Bill immediately. After all of the lecturing, and Eddie constantly nodding along with everything he was saying.

"So how are you doing with all of this?" Mike asked.

"Honestly, it's dread and guilt." he paused. "Also fear."

"I think I know what you mean," Mike said and Eddie could tell he was rubbing his forehead remembering something. "Dread is like any good nightmare you know?" he continued "It doesn't matter where you run because it keeps coming back just the same. As time runs out your feet become heavier until they are set in concrete on the tracks.

And then all you can do is wait to be destroyed, wait to be nothing more than I don't know bones I guess."

"Geez Mike you're definitely an English major that was a very long metaphor," Eddie laughed shaking his head even though Mike couldn't see him.

"Yeah sorry about that I get into tangents you know how that goes." Eddie smiled remembering all the sidetracked conversations he and Mike have had. He missed that.

"It's okay I'm just glad you could talk to me because I needed you to understand why I am going to be depressed for a month after I have this conversation."

"I don't agree with what you did, but I'm here to talk if you need it." They fell into silence before saying their goodbyes. He missed Mike, talking to him brought him back to times when before he would make a stupid mistake.

He shut off his phone and laid down on his bed glad that Bill was asleep so he could sort of be alone to think about what he was going to do. He knew he was stalling, and the feeling was bubbling up in his stomach yet again. He had to do this for the sake of Richie. He loved Richie, and he knew that Richie deserved to be happy. Even if it wasn't with him.

He stood up his hands shaking as he made his way to the door slowly. With every step, he felt his heart beating faster, and time seemed to stand still as he made his way across the hall his mind filled with worry, and regret.

He brought his hand up knocking on the door quietly wincing as the sound echoed through the empty hallway. He bounced on his feet looking around as he waited for someone to answer. When no one answered, he knocked again, louder this time, and waited until he heard a loud groan followed by footsteps. The door opened a disheveled Richie was looking back at him obviously just woken up judging my his hair, but his lips turned into a wide grin when he saw Eddie.

"Hey, baby why are you over so late? Miss me so soon?" Richie asked his tone deep and scratchy from just waking up. He rubbed his eyes behind his glasses, and Eddie felt like melting at the sight completely forgetting why he was there in the first place. He sighed and pushed his way past Richie into the room.

"Actually I have to tell you something," he started slowly. Richie closed the door behind him walking over to Eddie.

"Okay what is it spaghetti man lay it on me." his tone was cheerful, and it made Eddie's stomach twist.

"Richie before I tell you this just know that I am so incredibly happy with our relationship, and you mean the absolute world to me." Eddie started, his voice growing faster as panic set in.

"Okay?" Richie questioned as he sat down on his bed finally catching onto Eddie's nervous demeanor. Eddie began to pace back a forth tears started to fall down his face as his breathing picking up slowly.

"Eddie, is this about the thing you were going to tell me earlier in Bills room?" Richie asked. Eddie sniffed and cuddled up into his shoulder tears flowing down his face. "I'm so sorry," he sobbed his voice muffled in Richie's shirt.

"What for?" Richie asked. Eddie kept his head down not wanting to make eye contact with Richie. "I..." he started and stopped letting out another sob. "I... I made out with Bill."

Richie's hand stopped, and Eddie could feel him tense under him.

"I think you should go." Richie finally spoke up his voice quiet almost weak.

"Richie I'm so sorry honestly it was a huge mistake. It means nothing." He grabbed onto Richie's arms pleading with him, but Richie ripped his arm from him and stood up.

"Eddie just go."

Eddie watched as Richie's eyes searched for anything, but him.

“Richie please,” Eddie said.

Richie did not look at him. He stood still his eyes glazed over, expressionless. Eddie looked down at his feet tears soaking his face.

“It meant nothing,” he said again, hoping that it would do anything.

“You know what Eddie I really don’t care right now if it meant nothing. You need to go.” Richie said.

“Guys?”

Eddie looked up to see Stan standing at the door. A towel was wrapped around his waist and his hair was wet dripping down onto his pale chest. He closed the door behind him and made his way over to his closet. Richie still hadn’t looked up.

“Richie, what’s going on?” Stan asked.

“Why don’t you ask Eddie,” Richie responded finally looking up over to Stan his brows furrowed. Stan looked over at Eddie quizzically. Tearful Eddie looked over at Stan not wanting to crush two of his friends in a matter of minutes but also wanting to get this over with.

“B-b-bill and I... we,” he paused not having the strength to finish.

“They made out,” Richie finished for him.

At that Eddie wanted to leave. He wanted to bolt out of the door that very second but he couldn’t make his feet move. It was as Mike said. He was stuck in concrete sinking further and further into the guilt.

“No Eddie you didn’t this has to be some kind of joke. I have to go see Bill.” Stan said and with that, he still in his towel left the room and headed across the hall. This left Eddie alone with Richie.

“Eddie explain how this happened,” Richie said. He slumped down next to Eddie on the floor still not making eye contact.

“Well after you passed out on the couch and made that huge confession. I saw Bill very drunk and I decided to help him up the stairs,” Eddie sniffed. “And I took him up to his room and was explaining everything that had happened with my mom and Bill was

being very touchy. He normally is like this so I didn't pay it any mind till he kissed me. I didn't stop it at first," He paused before finishing. "I thought about how we were kids and how I had always wanted this, but then I stopped it because it felt wrong. Bill isn't you Richie and he never will be," he finished.

The two sat in silence as Richie took in what Eddie had said.

"Eddie, what happened with your mom?" Richie looked down at him. Concern and hurt were laced in his eyes, and Eddie looked up at him. The two looked at each other until Richie looked away again.

"She hit me," Eddie said. The words stung to say out loud while he was sober. It wasn't something he was planning on telling anyone other than Bill.

"Eddie," Richie said his voice filled with hurt. Eddie could feel his gaze on him but he didn't look up fearing that if he did the tears would fall again. The last thing that he wanted was Richie to feel bad for him. What he had done was wrong and there was nothing he could do to fix it.

"I'm fine Richie she can't hurt me anymore." He tried to sound strong but his voice came out to be almost a whisper.

For the first time since the morning had started Eddie was happy for the silence that hung in the room. He closed his eyes and rested his head against the side of Richie's bed. He felt Richie's pinky brush passed his own. He reached for Richie's pinky and the two interlocked them. This was okay. They were going to be okay. For now.

### **Author's Note:**

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